

**NOTES**  
**City of San Jose Crime Prevention Program Community Meeting**  
**January 6, 2016**  
**Cornerstone Community Church**  
**5655 Gallup Drive, San Jose, 95118**

**Background**

Twenty community members attended this meeting, including property owners and managers, tenants, and advocates. The meeting format consisted of a slide presentation on the Crime Free Program followed large group Questions and Answers. Community members then broke into two small groups, one was in Spanish and the other in English (a Vietnamese language group was available but not needed). In the small groups, community members were asked to discuss their concerns about crime and safety in and around their apartment buildings, and to offer suggestions for preventing crime and enhancing safety. Participants were also invited to share their written comments and questions on comment cards.

**Q & A following presentation of the Crime Free Program**

Q: How long will it take to implement?

A: Depends on if it is a set program or specialized. But probably about a year.

Q: Does it apply to single-family homes or only multiunit housing?

A: Only multiunit housing.

Q: Might renters insurance could go up because in "crime area"?

A: (Councilmember) If you have lower crime, you have lower rates

Q: Some of these components are already in place. Why do we need this program?

A: Currently doing:

- Neighborhood watch
- Environment design
- Presentations about safety to residents

Currently NOT doing:

- Police not sharing information with property owners re: crimes or criminal records.

Q: Who determines what type of crimes the landlord can evict for?

A: Police provides information about criminal activity in the area to the landlord. The List of criminal activity is in lease addendum

Q: Who would monitor the program?

A: No decisions have been made in S.J. In other cities, it is the Police Department

Q: Has there been litigation against cities based on this program?

A: Addendum has gone all the way to Supreme Court. The Housing Authority in Oakland was allowed to continue utilizing the addendum after it went to Supreme Court.

Q: Mayors Gang Prevention Task Force exists. Are we stipulating that they aren't doing the job?

A: This is about Police Department working with property owners and residents.

Q: Does this include homeless people? They are also part of this issue.

A: Chronic homelessness is a huge issue. City can give information about programs addressing homelessness. This program does not address this issue.

Q: Does this program mean that people getting out on parole would not be able to live in the neighborhood (housing unit participating in the program)?

A: They can, but if they get involved in illegal activity, the whole family could be evicted.

Q: So, only current crimes?

A: They do encourage background checks, so it is up to landlord if they want to rent to someone on parole. (See next comment)

Follow up from audience: As property manager, I cannot discriminate against someone that has been a sexual offender so I think it would be discrimination to refuse to rent to someone on parole.

Q: Can you please share concerns about the program that organizations are voicing?

A: Stakeholder group voiced concern about the lease addendum. One concern is that if a tenant has people over and the visitor commits a crime, tenant is subject to eviction. A second concern is that victims of domestic abuse/violence might be evicted if they report it, leading some to not report it. The stakeholder group also said that the Program unfairly targets people without financial resources and can cause people and families to be displaced, creating more homelessness.

## **Small Group Discussions**

### ***Spanish Language Group***

#### Concerns with Crime and Safety

- Residents allowing homeless to stay in their residence
- Owners want to make their own rules
- Homeless are aggressive
- Mailbox theft
- Homeless encampments
- Car theft
- Landlords take advantage of renters and rent is high
- Rent control
- Problems with housing post boxes involving destruction and theft. No one wants to solve this problem.

### Suggestions for Preventing Crime/Enhancing Safety

- Community Center
- Rent control
- Just cause to evict
- More police patrol
- Help for homeless
- More police (hopefully 1,000)

### ***English Language Group***

#### Concerns with Crime and Safety

- Safety in common areas
- Homeless
- Lighting – city and on property
- How can a property owner bridge gap of another property owner who is not taking care of a problem tenant?
- Graffiti at Via Monte/Hoffman – it is gang related
- Gang activity
- Drugs
- Culture of fear by tenants. Retaliation
- Understand mentality of the low-income community - they won't call on their own.
- Fear and retaliation
- Ninety-day no-cause eviction is a problem because other "good" tenants have to endure another 90 days
- Car break-ins
- Guns, stabbings
- Parking – Juan's Hauling (Limo service)
- Illegal dumping
- What is P.D. currently doing to build relationships with tenants?
- Tenants don't believe police will do anything anyway so they don't bother calling.

### Suggestions for Preventing Crime/Enhancing Safety

- Better relationships between property owners, tenants, and police
- Police notify owners when a problem occurs
- Better communication between property owners
- Property owners should be held accountable for their problem tenants
- Property owners' information (phone #) should be public and easy to find
- Need a strong management presence
- Valuable to have positive relationships with police & property managers
- California Bureau of Real Estate
  - Continuing education
  - Tri-County
  - Only mandatory for managers
- More police foot patrol an presence - criminal activity went down when officers walked around Whole Foods area.

### **Comment Card Responses**

"Very concerned that this is a bad program which adds little to existing resources, and threatens to landlord abuse. My primary concern is the lease addendum. It is too broad. I believe the problems are more from bad landlords who don't use the tools/rights they have to address problems at their properties. I am a concerned community member."

"You may want to break up the feedback groups in: renters, owners, property managers. I would like to have a security assessment done at the property I manage."

"One-day, eight hour training is not enough. All tenants must have lease. Managers to go through fire safe assessment (Renters' rights allows this already). Police to assess property (putting fear in community) if you don't let tenants know. Why only four apartment complexes? Does this apply to the whole city? Who determines what type of crime the landlords can include (it can be a minor robbery)? The Police Department will oversee the program but the SJPd is short staffed. Will it be properly monitored? I am concerned about this program."

"How do tenants get rights? How can we stop this program from coming to San Jose? How can we keep tenants safe from indirectly violating the addendum? Crime is on going, but where are previous known criminals supposed to live? Why can landlord evict without a criminal conviction?"